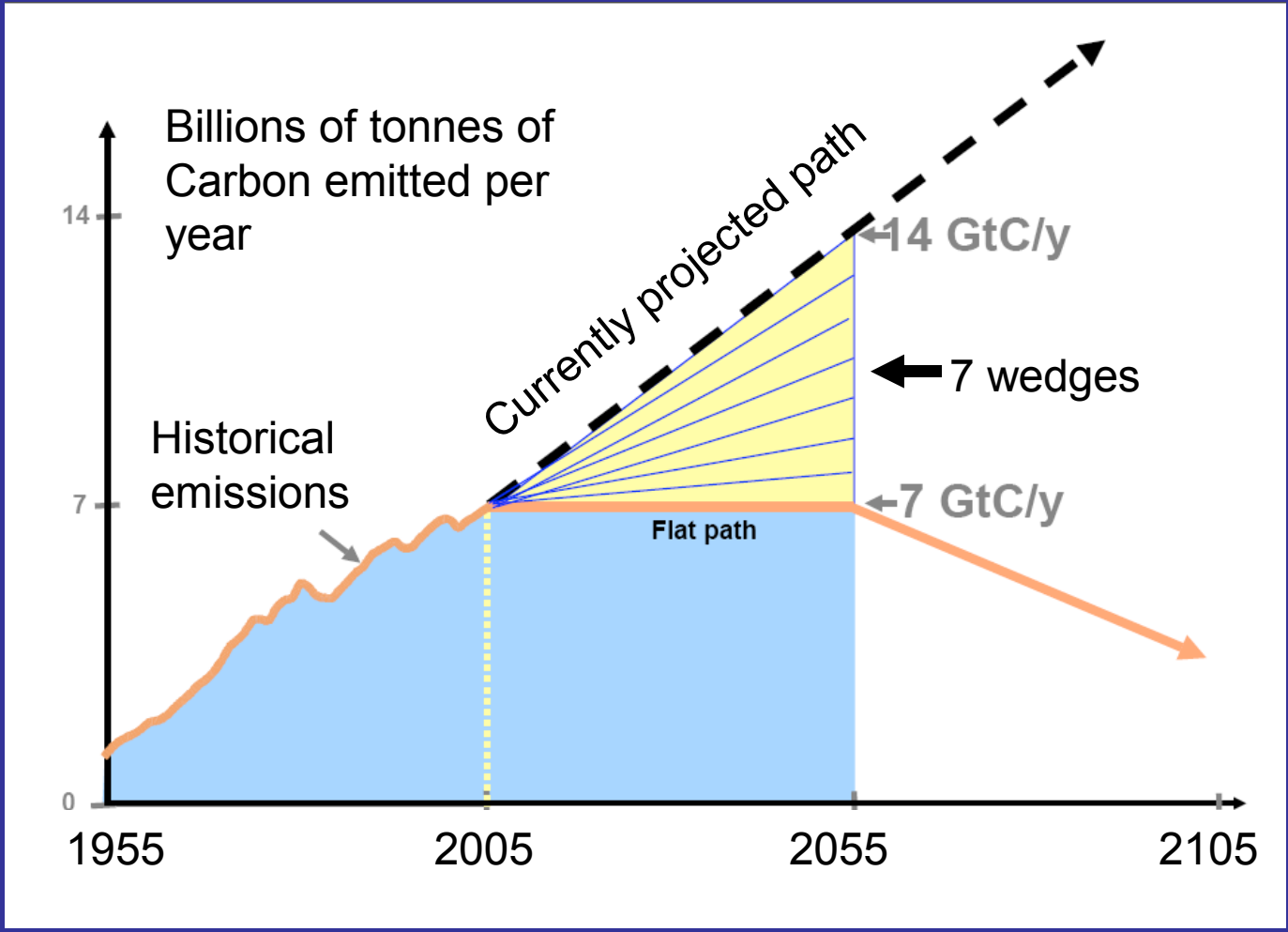
Agrofuels are not clean energy

In the name of ‘clean energy’ millions of hectares of rainforest are felled, peatlands are drained, savannah is ploughed up and farmers and pastoralists have their land taken away.

An IPCC proposal for stabilising CO2: the Pascala and Socolow wedges. Each wedge saves 25 billion tonnes of emissions between now and 2050.



Decarbonisation of Electricity and Fuels:Biofuels

- Fossil-carbon fuels can be replaced by biofuels such as ethanol
- A wedge of biofuel could be achieved by the production of 34 million barrels per day of ethanol to replace gasoline in 2055, provided the ethanol is fossil carbon free
- This is 50 times larger than current ethanol production rate
- Would require 250 million hectares of high yield plantations equivalent to one sixth of the world's cropland

Photo courtesy of NREL

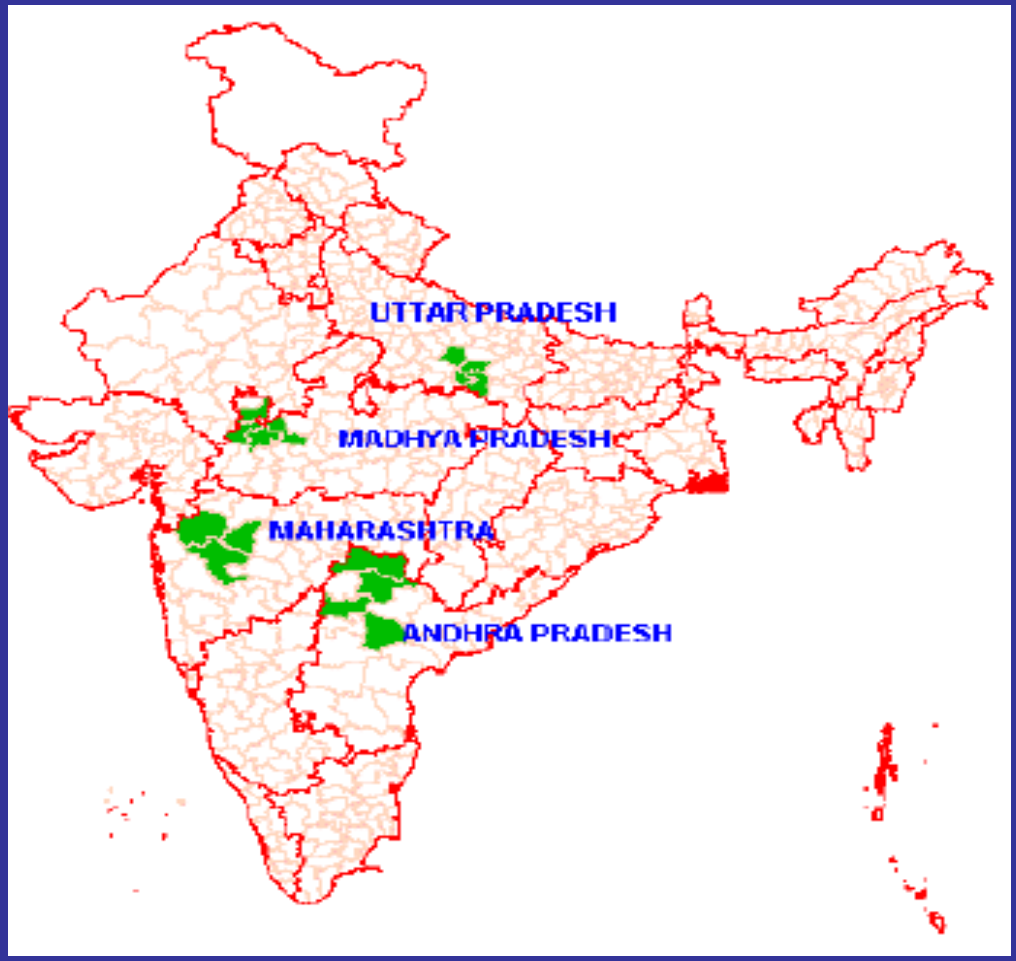
Using current practices, one wedge requires planting an area the size of India with biofuels crops

A new land grab in the name of climate change mitigation

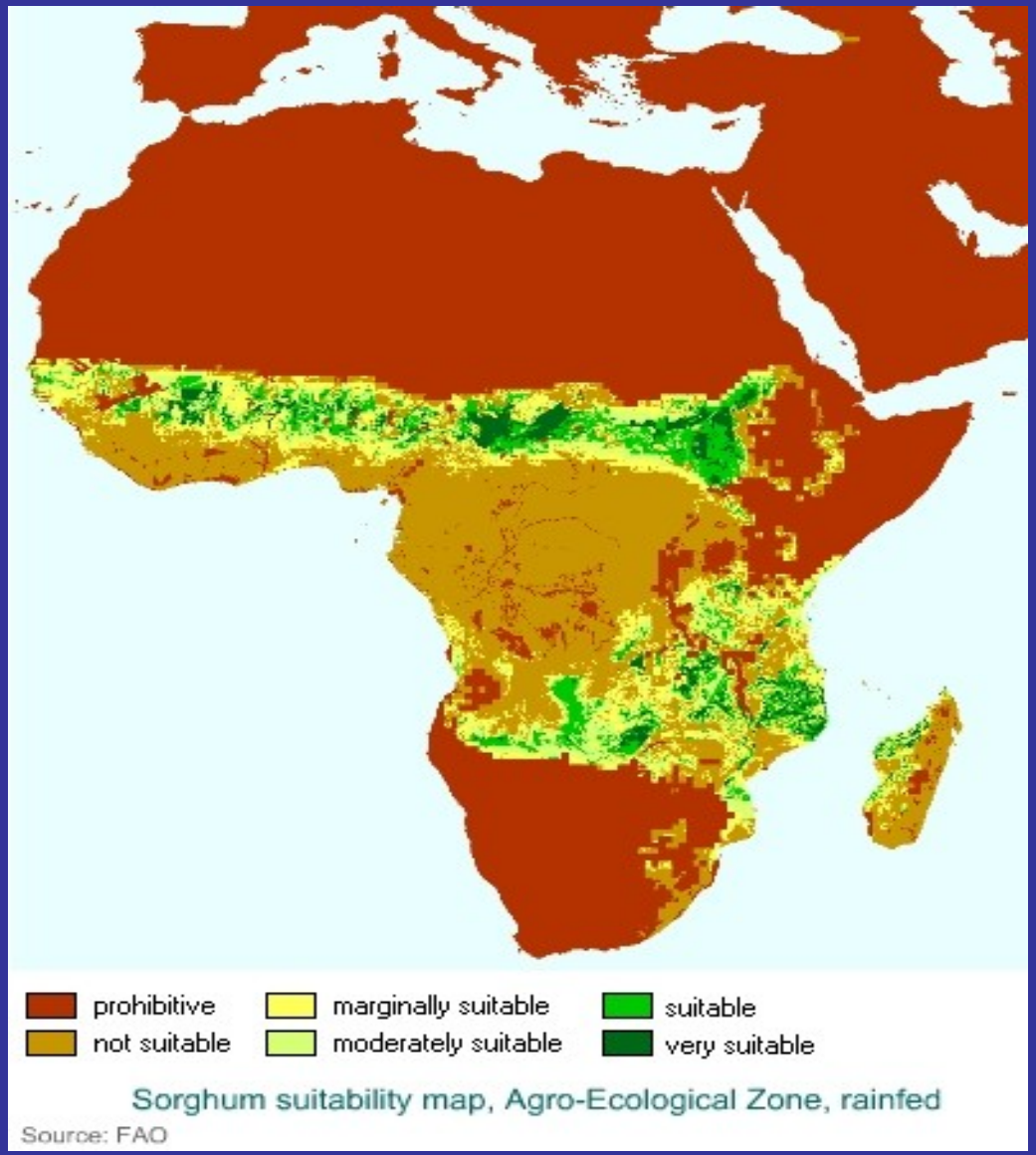
"Planting an area the size of India with biofuel crops"

Companies, governments and international institutions are drawing up the biofuel maps of the future – and most of the biofuels are to come from the global South.

Jatropha for biodiesel

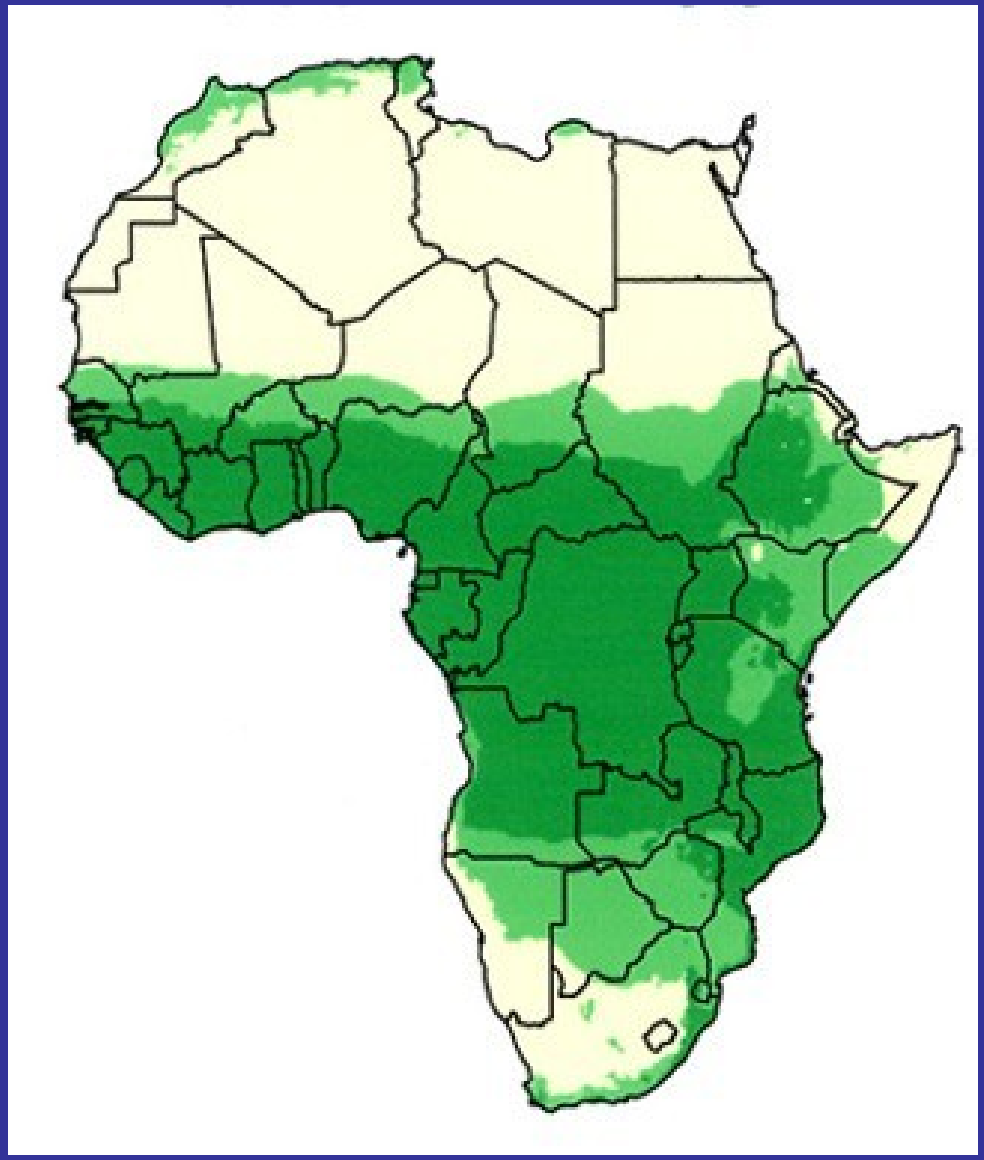


Sorghum for biofuels



From:
"The New Biofuel Republics"

biofuel industry website
biopact.com



"More than 50% of the vast continent of Africa may support biofuel crops.

But success depends on many factors."

From 'Eco-world'

According to NASA, the rate of Amazon destruction correlates with the market price of soya.

In the past few months, the price of soya has started rising again, **thanks to biofuels**.

And the Amazon is being cut down faster than before.

Amazon rainforest destroyed for soya

Burning the rainforest to clear land for soya plantations

As ethanol pushes up the price of sugar cane, this rainforest in Uganda is to be sacrificed for sugar plantations.

South-east Asia's peatlands hold up to 50 billion tonnes of carbon

Draining Borneo's peat for plantations

Logging and oil palm expansion go hand in hand

Burning the rainforest to clear land for palm oil

Borneo ablaze:
Annual peat fires pump billions of tonnes of CO_2 into the atmosphere

The human cost of biofuel monocultures: pesticide poisoning in paraguay

Army repression against peasants protesting against soya plantations

As the rich start burning food in cars, food prices go up and poor people struggle to survive

Mexicans taking to the streets as ethanol makes their staple food unaffordable

A declaration by Latin American NGOs:

"We want food sovereignty, not biofuels…

While Europeans maintain their lifestyle based on automobile culture, the population of Southern countries will have less and less land for food crops and will loose its food sovereignty…

We are therefore appealing to the governments and people of the European Union countries to seek solutions that do not worsen the already dramatic social and environmental situation of the peoples of Latin America, Asia and Africa."

Sawit Watch, Indonesian NGO:

"Palm oil for biofuels increases social conflicts and undermines land reform in Indonesia…

It is unavoidable that, as a consequence of Europe's biofuels policy, the land rights of indigenous peoples and local communities will be relinquished further, and that food security will be undermined and lands for agricultural purposes and subsistence livelihoods will diminish."

Environmental Rights Action / Friends of the Earth Nigeria:

"It is a push by industry to make another scramble for Africa, grab the land and continue with business as usual. The industrial bio-energy push to increased bio-energy demand will be nothing other than an effort at extending the frontiers of neo-colonialism in its continued march on the back of the fabled market forces."

CONCLUSION

Biomass from waste,
wind,
solar,
small-scale hydro
are all truly renewable energy.

Agro-fuels from large monocultures are not.